The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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Who is She?

THERE is a little maiden—
Who is she? Do you know?—
Who always has a welcome
Wherever she may go.

Her face is like the May-time,
Her voice is like a bird's;
The sweetest of all music
Is in her lightsome words.

The loveliest of blossoms
Spring where her light foot treads,
And most delicious odors
She all around her sheds—

The breath of purple clover
Upon the breezy hills;
The smell of garden roses
And yellow daffodils.

Each spot she makes the brighter,
As if she were the sun.
And she is sought and cherished
And loved by every one;

By old folks and by children,
By lofty and by low.
Who is this little maiden?
Does anybody know?

You surely must have met her—
You certainly can guess;
What! must I introduce her?
Her name is Cheerfulness.

Marian Douglas.

Mamma's Wee Lady.

TWO little eyes, loving bright eyes,
Shining and bright, and blue as the skies;
Two little ears to hear all the news,
Two little feet to wear the new shoes;
Two little hands, busy all day,
One little body to get in the way;
One little mouth to give kisses so sweet,
Mamma's little lady, dainty and neat;
With ten little fingers and ten little toes,
And what she'll be good for, nobody knows.

For the Myrtle.

The Story of Mother Michel and her Cat.

FROM THE FRENCH.

CHAPTER I.

THERE lived in Paris, during the reign of Louis XV. an old countess who was very rich. She was very good also, and gave a great deal of her money to the poor. Her husband was killed in the battle of Fontenoy, the 11th of May 1745, and his noble widow still continued to mourn for him. Having no children, and living almost entirely alone, she had given herself up to a very strange habit, which however, did not mar her real virtues and excellent qualities; she had a great love for animals; but it seemed to be an unfortunate love, for all her pets had died in her arms.

Her first pet, a green parrot, had died of eating too much parsley, and too much of cracknel had caused the death of her second pet, a beautiful puppy dog. A third favorite, a monkey, having broken his chain, went roaming about the trees in the garden one evening, where he was caught in a shower and got a cold in his head which led him to his grave. After these the countess had several different kinds of birds; but some of these flew away, and others died. Overcome by so

many sorrows, the countess shed many tears, and her friends, to comfort her, offered her some squirrels, some nice canaries, some white parrots, but she would not take them, and she even refused a beautiful little poodle-dog that played checkers, danced the polka, and ate salad. "No, no," she would say to her friends, "I do not wish for any more pets; the air of my house is not good for them."

However, one day as she was coming out of church, she saw a band of children pass by, running and shouting. When seated in her carriage she surveyed the crowd and saw that the cause of all the noise was a poor cat to whose tail some naughty boys had fastened a sauce-pan. The cat had been running a long time and seemed to be all tired out. Seeing this, the boys formed a ring about him, and began to throw stones at him. The unhappy cat seemed to know that he had no friends among the boys and so gave himself up to them.

Several stones had already struck the poor animal, when the countess taking pity on him, got out of her carriage, went through the crowd, and cried, "I will give a louis to the one who will save that animal."

These words produced a magic effect; the cat was in danger of being smothered by the boys who disputed with one another as to whom should have the honor of rescuing him. Finally one who was stronger than the rest, overcame his rivals, seized the cat and gave him half dead to the countess.

"Well done," said she, "but wait, my brave man, here is the promised reward," and she gave him a gold piece which had just come out of the mint; then she told him to take off the sauce-pan.

As the boy obeyed, the countess looked at the creature which she had just saved. He looked as if he had lived all his life in the gutters, and his natural leanness was increased by the accidents of a long and irregular life; his short fur was soiled with mud so that she could hardly tell what color it was; he was so thin that she could count his ribs, and so weak that he could not possibly have eaten a mouse; the only thing in his favor was his face.

"Dear me! how homely he is," said the countess after she had ended her examination.

The moment she entered the carriage the cat fixed his large sea-green eyes upon her and gave her a look full of gratitude and at the same time mingled with reproach. This look seemed to say, "You have yielded to a generous impulse, you have seen me suffering and have taken pity on me. But now that you see how homely I am you do not care for me. You are not truly kind, for if you were, you would still care for me even though I am ugly. You are thinking, perhaps, that my misfortune came of my bad looks and that you had better leave me where you found me. Do not pride yourself for having done a good deed, for you have not done me any good, you have only prolonged my agony. Let me go, let me go."

The countess was moved to tears, and she thought that this cat must be uncommonly wise, and she said to her lady companion, mother Michel, who had remained in the carriage, "Take this cat and carry it home."

"Surely you are not going to take so homely a cat as that home!" exclaimed mother Michel.

"I am," answered the countess, "and it shall have a place at my fireside and a seat at my table, and if you wish to please me you must treat this animal with as much kindness as you treat me."

"My lady shall be obeyed, but what a wonder this is!"

And now for home. *M. C. Schouler.*

May and Might.

Oh! thought Anna Markham to herself as she closed the book she had been reading, a history of the mission in Madagascar, "How I wish it were possible for me to do something like this for Christ," and here Anna lost herself in a sort of heroic dream. She pictured herself teaching, exhorting the heathen in India, or in some far African station, where the gospel had never before been heard. She thought of herself as parting, almost without regret from her friends, to encounter all the hardships of a mission life, the dangers of fever, wild beasts and persecution, especially the persecution. Anna fancied herself enduring suffering, starvation, imprisonment and torture for her faith, and had just come so far in her romance as to be "led out for execution," and "forgive her murderers with her last breath," when her mother called her from the next room.

The rapt ecstatic looks on Anna's face gave way instantly to a fretful frown. "Oh, dear!" she said sharply to herself, "I never can be let alone a minute."

She threw down the book and went to her mother.

"Well, what is it?" she said in a most ungracious tone.

"I want you to run over to Mrs. O'Hara and take her the dinner Katy has got ready for her, and Anna, if you can, get her up and make up her bed."

"Oh, mother!" said Anna, as if she had been asked to perform impossibilities, "I can't bear to go to Mrs. O'Hara's, and the house is so dirty and disagreeable."

"She is an old lady, and all alone," said her mother in some displeasure. "She cannot do anything for herself now, and it is the duty of her neighbors to take care of her till she is well."

"She might go to the hospital and let the Sisters of Charity take care of her."

"She won't go, as you know very well, and there are some good reasons on her side too, and besides do you think it would be any more agreeable for the Sisters to nurse Mrs. O'Hara than it is for you?"

"Well, I don't like to," said Annie very crossly.

"I'll go, Aunt Jane," said Anna's cousin, Miss Kent, who was drawing by the window.

"No Milly, Anna will go," said Mrs. Markham. "I advise you to think what manner of spirit you are of, my daughtr."

Anna made no answer and she obeyed her mother, for she knew she must; but she performed her errand in so ungracious and uncharitable a manner, and assumed such an air of martyrdom, that Mrs. O'Hara, who was by no means reserved in speech, told her rather decidedly, that she'd "never be the lady her mother was," and Anna went home disgusted, and wishing herself away from a home where "no one understood her."

By the next day, however, she had forgotten about the matter, and was talking to her cousin Milly about the missionary work of the church.

"Oh," she said with enthusiasm, "I should like nothing better than to go as missionary to Africa."

"What would you do there?" asked Milly, rather amused.

"Oh! teach the children, and the women, and take care of the sick, and so forth."

"You think the heathen savages of Africa would be less disagreeable than Mrs. O'Hara?" said Milly.

Anna was very much vexed for a moment, but then she began to feel a little ashamed.

"Isn't it rather better on the whole," said Milly, "to look about us and see what little things we can do if we will, than to spend the time fancying what great things we would do if we only could?"

"The Hardest Part of the Verse."

Lydia Stuart sat in school beside Elsie Graham, a poor lame child, who was often absent from school, and was quite backward in her studies. Lydia was very kind to Elsie, and used to help her with her lessons. Indeed, Lydia was a great friend to all the neglected children in the school. If any one fell, she was sure to run and help her up; if any one cried over a hard lesson, she was by her side, trying to help her out of her perplexties. The teacher often thought, if anybody was mindful of the precept, "Weep with them that weep," it was Lydia.

It happened one day that Elsie Graham got to the head of her class,—above Lydia. It was the first time, and she was very happy. At recess the girls cried out, "Elsie Graham has got up to the head!" and all flocked around her except Lydia, who kept her seat, with her hand over her eyes, and her eyes on her book. The rest of the day the teacher saw that she looked very sober, and staid at her desk.

Then school was done, she overtook Lydia trudging slowly home; and she asked the little girl if she did not feel well.

"Yes, ma'am, I feel very well," answered Lydia.

"I thought something seemed to be the matter with you," said the teacher.

Tears came into her eyes: but, after a little kind talk from the teacher, Lydia said, in a rather hesitating manner, "You see, I don't feel glad Elsie has got up to the head; and I know I ought to; for you know the verse you read to us, and what you said, 'Rejoice with them that do rejoice.' Oh, that's the hardest part of the verse!" and the child looked down, seeming quite ashamed.

Poor Lydia! And is this true? Are there boys, who, provoked by the praisies bestowed upon a school-fellow, ever meanly try to lessen his merits? Are little girls ever sorry if others have what they have not? Do children ever seek to undervalue what is pleasing to their brothers and sisters? Is not this breaking the blessed Bible rule, to "rejoice with them that do rejoice?"

For the Myrtle.

Pretty Is that Pretty Does.

LITTLE Miss Kitty in flounce and feather,
Striking an attitude grand and fine,
Haunting the mirror to find out whether
Any will possibly you outshine,—

'Tisn't a matter of silks and laces,
Bows and feathers and fine array,
'Tisn't a matter of fresh young faces
That makes us beautiful day by day.

If you go forth so vain and airy,
And flout and simper at all you meet,
Though you are dressed like a floating fairy,
You'll be the homliest girl on the street.

Take my word for it, winsome Kitty,
Not all the stories your mirrors tell,
Will make it certain that you are pretty,—
You must be lovely in heart as well.

Cheerful temper and gentle spirit,
Heart unselfish and full of grace,
Give the fairest their crowning merit,
And light with beauty the plainest face.

H. A. B.

TRUTH and holiness are, in the Christian system, so intimately allied, that the warm and faithful inculcation of the one, lays the foundation for the other.

An Allegory.

"There was mourning in all the land because the clouds withheld their rain. Flowers faded, and the grass withered. Trees cast their fruit before their season, and the cattle on the hills and the beasts of the field perished, because there was no water. Man said, 'Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath his promise, "that, while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest shall not cease," come to naught?'

"A little cloud, sailing through the heavens, saw how this great sorrow filled the land; and it was moved with compassion.

"But it thought, 'What can I do? I am only a small cloud, with a few bright drops on my bosom; and what are they compared with this great need?"

"Just then it saw a bunch of violets drooping beneath the burning rays of the noonday sun. Bending over them was a child, whose tears came thick and fast as she caressed the fragrant blossoms.

"'No violets to sell to-morrow,' she sobbed; 'and brother and I will have no bread.'

"Then the little cloud thought, 'How much better to refresh flowers, and so fill one heart with gladness, than to wander hither and thither through the bright paths of the sky simply for my own amusement!'

"So it went nearer to the earth, and gave lovingly its drops of water to the thirsty flowers.

"Now another fair cloud, seeing what had been wrought, said, 'Surely I can do as much.' So it went on a like mission.

"Then another followed, and still another; and so close together did they come, and so harmoniously did they work, that the blessed rain fell on the whole land. Then flowers sprang up by the wayside, and the hills wrapped themselves in robes of green; and through all the valleys went the husbandman, sowing the good seed with a lavish hand and hopeful heart."

INSULT not misery, neither deride infirmity, nor ridicule deformity. The first shows inhumanity, the second folly, and the third pride. He that made him miserable, made thee happy to lament him; He that made him weak, make thee strong to support him. Do not show thy ingratitude to thy great Creator by despising any of His creatures.

For the Myrtle.

Ethel's Story Book.

[Many of our little readers have read "Trotty's Story Book." But Trotty is not the only child who has made a story-book. Trotty only printed his story-book; he did not write it. But we have a story-book written by a little girl not so old as Trotty, and printed by her mamma to send to all her friends for a New Year gift. This mamma has written many stories for the readears of the MYRTLE, as they will know when they see the little girl's name. And perhaps in years to come little Ethel will do the same. But she does not know that we are going to share her little-girl story with all the readers of the MYRTLE. Here it is, in four chapters and a preface, like a "truly" grown-up book.]

THE ROBIN'S CHRISTMAS.

PREFACE. I was in bed one morning, when Mamma asked me to make up a story about a Robin to send to everybody at Christmas time. I was a long time before I could think of any, but at last I made this up very slowly, and Mamma kept saying, well what else? what was it like? and I told her, then she writ it down as I said it and then she read it to me whilst I writ it down again in my own way of spelling.

CHAPTER I.

IN the mossy woods were pine and fir stalks peep from the gloomy shades that are like a prison, where the branches all meet round in a sercle above, and whistle and moan, and on the ground the leavs of the wintergreen run along their feeble stem and fir hairs cover them and clumsy looking giant funguses run right up to them, and the toads jump upon the giants heads and break off their necks. There in that woods a Robin lived in his peaseful home with his little family. Every day he flew away to get some worms for them, and the dear little birds opened their bills and made sush rougish eyes that the old bird smiled.

CHAPTER II.

It was a snowy Christmas that Robin flew away out of the woods not far off where there was a white house with green blinds and withered vines creeping up it, and under the windows there were rose bushes with red berries. There were two little girls named Ethel and Oceana whose pet name were Toto, (this is true surely,) were looking out and they saw the Robin hopping about pecking into the snow. Their Mamma told them they might give him some crumbs and they threw him some. Lltle Toto going rather too near, it startled Robin but he was feeding so eagerly that he did not mind it enough to fly away, and Ethel said take care not to frighten him, and Toto said, what por? then he flew home to have his Christmas party.

CHAPTER III.

Robin's Christmas tree was decked with network of snow and ice-drops, and there were acorn cups full of crumbs, and red leaves as little plates with roses berries. His friends arrived; the gentlemen Robins wore red vests and the lady Robins had on opera cloks trimmed with red. They playd on pipes made of rustic stems with little holes made by the beak of the carpenter Robin, some hopped about and sang sweet tunes. There was a fairy there named Snow Drop who writ upon brown and red and yellow leavs with a thorn, "A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all," and told the master of the party to go away with them to all his friends and bring some acorn cups around his neck full of crumbs for the few Robins that had not come to the party.

CHAPTER IV.

Robin flew to the house where the little girls lived and left one of the leavs on the snowy doorstep. The little girls went to the door and found it and read what was on it. Ethel called out to him don't forget to take one to dear Papa in the ship, and Toto said don't adet Papa in shup, and then Ethel said, and don't forget to take one to grandpa and grandma in London, and Toto repeated dampla and danma Lonlun, and Ethel said don't orget to — but robin said at last, O children don't tease me by telling me any more of what I must do, for I'm in a great hurry to get through with my business as we have a very grand party and my friends will be waiting for me. And Toto called out, what party? what por? what like? but robin had flown away.

Ethel Clelia Lega Weeks.

Tree-Top Trouble.

DO you think, little sorrowful lady,
That no one has trouble but you?
When you wish "to be gay as a robin,"
Remember, we robins get blue.

Are n't there bloodthirsty cats to appall us
With fearful and terrible stare?
So a mother-bird never is happy,
Nor free from solicitous care.

Why, the mischievous boys of the village
I think will unsettle my brain,
When they threaten to torture and pillage,
Regardless of protest or pain.

And then—Mr. Robin is careless;
He don't stay at home as he should;
And it I reproach him, he whistles,
And flies to his club in the wood.

The nest, though I love it so dearly,
Holds trouble and turmoil and sin,
For Jack, greedy bird, is the strongest,
And grasps the supply I bring in;

While poor little Dick, thin and hungry,
Feels slighted because he is small,
And Scrawney is always protesting
I give him no dinner at all.

There was Sweetie, who fell in the fountain,
Out-looking for me from the nest;
It seems to me always that Sweetie
Was dearest, and brightest, and best.

So you see, little sorrowful lady,
That even the birds of the air
Cannot fly from the ills that beset them,
Nor flutter through life without care.

There is sorrow for women, for robins,
In tree-top and wide dwelling, too;
But I know, of a country that's better
To seek in the autumn—do you?

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—Our parish in Beverly, celebrated Christmas by two evenings' festivities in the Town Hall. Christmas eve was devoted to the children, who were entertained by "The Copper Toe Shoe," which beautifully and impressively introduced the Christmas tree. Santa Claus bountifully remembered all, and especially the pastor and his family. The second evening's entertainment was for the older ones, and was much enjoyed by a large company. The net receipts are $145.

—The Sunday School at Springfield, enjoyed a visit from Santa Claus at their vestry on Christmas evening. He distributed the fruit of a heavily-laden tree among scores of happy children, and also provided for their enjoyment with recitations, singing and the like. A crowded vestry added zest to the good time enjoyed by all.

—The Newtonville Society kept Christmas eve very pleasantly. There was a little drama for the children: there was a fine old Santa Claus and a noble Christmas tree; there were gifts for old and young, including a clock from the Sunday School to their efficient Superintendent, Bro. Trofitter, a set of Macdonald's Works to Miss Elliott, the organist, and a pair of fine carbon photographs to the pastor, from his Bible class; and finally there was a happy time for everybody.

—On Christmas evening, the Universalist Sunday School in Tynsboro held their Christmas festival. The hall beneath the church was trimmed with evergreen. Two trees stood one at each end of the platform, adorned with their attractive fruits, and between them were planted small trees nicely trimmed to conceal the stage, from which the children spoke and sung to the delight of all present. The exercises lasted one hour, and nearly all the songs and recitations—and they were excellent—related directly to the nativity and mission of the Saviour.

—Our friends in Quincy had a very pleasant gathering in their church on Christmas night. The preliminary exercises included recitations by members of the Sunday School, and appropriate music. Afterwards, two large trees yielded their gifts to all of the children, and also to the older folks, including the pastor and his wife, who were very generously remembered by the society.

MAINE.

—A note from Norway, reads as follows: DEAR EDITOR: Will it interest you or the readers of the MYRTLE to know how our Sunday School celebrated Christmas? We chose the 25th for our Festival and met in Concert Hall, which was crowded to its utmost capacity by the children and their friends. The hall was beautifully and tastefully decorated with evergreen wreaths, festoons and mottoes. After some excellent music, by the Norway Sextette Band, the school, ledby Vice Superintendant E. W. Howe, read and sang the special service for Christmas, from the "Altar." This was followed by some very brief remarks from the pastor, touching the meaning of the occasion, and the impatience of the children, little and big, was plentifully rewarded by the distribution of the fruit of three heavily laden trees, besides many gifts too heavy to be hung, which, therefore, had to be scattered in more convenient places. All seemed to enjoy the occasion, and to feel that this was one more merry Christmas.

—Dr. E. C. Bolles created almost a panic among the children in Rockland, Me., entertaining them with "stereoptican" views. The *Gazette* says: "Tickets had been distributed gratuitously through the several Sunday Schools and the doors were besieged by a large crowd of eager boys and girls some time before the hour of exhibition. When the doors were opened they crowded in. The hall was well filled, some 600 or 700 children and a considerable number of older persons being present. The pictures shown on the large screen embraced views of California scenery, statuary, portraits of distinguished individuals, foreign views, Niagara, and New England scenes, Scriptural subjects, etc., closing with some excellent instantaneous photographs of childhood, in its varying moods, which latter delighted the young folks hugely."

—Our Sunday School in Rockland gave a very pleasant and successful entertainment at Farwell & Ames' Hall, on Christmas evening, to an excellent audience. The programme consisted of music, tableaux, and the effective rendering of the piece from the Dec. *Helper* entitled "Fairy Favors," with a third scene added, introducing a well-laden Christmas tree, drawn forward by a team of "brownies." The fruit of this tree was distributed by St. Nicholas and the fairies. About $45 was added to the Sunday School treasury by this entertainment, besides paying all expenses.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

—At Nashua a Tree was planted in one of the pleasantest halls in the city, and the school and congregation joined in making the occasion, as pronounced by all, "the pleasantest ever held by the school." Mrs. Potter's Christmas piece in the *Helper*, was given—and the school sang Christmas carols. All were then treated to a generous supply of refreshments, as well as gifts from the tree. The Superintendent, Bro. C. M. Langley, was presented with a large adjustable easy chair, and the pastor, Rev. H. A. Philbrook, with an elegant silver "tea service."

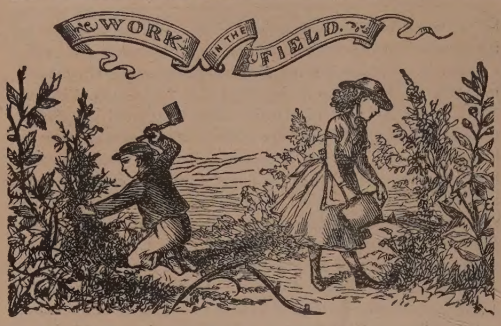
VERMONT.

—There were no signs of panic or hard times in "The Church of the Messiah" at St. Johnsbury on Christmas eve. The church was packed with people who seemed to be in full sympathy with the joyous occasion. Two large trees were overloaded with presents for the children, and all seemed willing to be reckoned among the children on the occasion. The Sunday School took part in the services, an address was delivered by the pastor, good music by the choir and school, and the evening was richly enjoyed by all present. This Church and Sunday School appear to be in a state of prosperity.

NEW YORK.

—The School in Morris held appropriate Christmas eve services. The church was beautifully trimmed with evergreens, a suitable platform erected, and the services commenced by reading the service book there. Prayer and a short address were offered by the pastor, Rev. O. Perkins. Christmas carols, recitations, declamations, and finally the Fairy scene, given in the December *Helper*, came in due order. This last was very finely rendered by Miss Emma M. Perkins, daughter of the pastor, as fairy Queen, and nine attendant fairies. Santa Claus came in with his presents, and sixty dollars' worth of gifts were soon in the hands of the members of the School. The pastor and his wife were kindly remembered in the distribution. The Sunday School has more than doubled its numbers since Mr. Perkins went to Morris, last March.

—The anniversary of the birth of the Saviour was observed by the Canton parish and Sunday School in their church, which was appropriately trimmed with evergreens and illuminated mottoes. A short address was given by the pastor, Rev. E. Davis, and appropriate singing by the School, after which an abundance of presents were distributed, each member of the School as well as many others being thus included.



Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON XLIV.—PAUL.

Question. — What did Paul find at Ephesus?

Answer. — Acts xix. 1.

Q. — Had they heard of Jesus?

A. — Acts xix. 2.

Q. — Whose disciples were they?

A. — Acts xix. 3.

Q. — When they heard of Him for whom John came to prepare the way, what did they do?

A. — Acts xix. 5.

Q. — How many were there of them?

A. — Acts xix. 7.

Q. — Who had probably been their instructor before Paul came to them?

A. — Acts xviii. 24, 25.

Q. — What did Paul then do in the Jewish synagogue?

A. — Acts xix. 8.

Q. — When some of the Jews opposed Paul and his doctrine concerning Christ, what did he do?

A. — Acts xix. 9.

Q. — How long did he preach here?

A. — Acts xix. 10.

Q. — People of how many nations, heard Paul during this time?

A. — Acts xix. 10.

NOTE. The temple of Diana at Ephesus, was one of the seven wonders of the world. Its size and beauty were remarkable. It was surrounded by 127 pillars that were given by as many different kings. People of many nations came to worship the goddess Diana in the temple; and therefore in this center, the Apostle addressed people of many nations, during the two years and three months he was in Ephesus.

Q. — What did some vagabond Jews attempt to do?

A. — Acts xix. 13.

NOTE. The Jews had no fixed dwelling place, but travelled from place to place, pretending that they had power over demons. As the ancients ascribed many diseases to the presence and influence of evil spirits, these exoricsts claimed the power of curing the diseases by casting out the evil spirits.

Q. — When they attempted to cast out evil spirits by the name of Jesus, what happened to them?

A. — Acts xix. 16.

Q. — How were the people in Ephesus affected by this?

A. — Acts xix. 17.

Q. — What did these exorcists do?

A. — Acts xix. 18.

Q. — What did they do with the books they had used in their pretended art?

A. — Acts xix. 19.

Q. — What was the estimated value of these books?

A. — Acts xix. 19.

Q. — Did these events help the cause of Christian truth?

A. — Acts xix. 20.

Enigma.

I am composed of 50 letters.
My 23, 12, 10, 26, 37, 39, 23, 32, 35, 41, 4, Jesus is.
My 36, 24, 50, 39, 1, 26, 6, 30, 44, 9, is trust.
My 5, 22, 8, 7, 45, 14, we ought to try to be.
My 48, 29 47, was created on the sixth day.
My 13, 10, 34, 16, 2, Jesus wants us to do.
My 3, 19, 38, is a hotel.
My 44, 23, 42, 49, 43, Jesus will do.
My 2, 7, 8, 11, 13, 17, 20, 31, 35, are alive.
My whole is the middle verse in the Bible.

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